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The Spectator

Thursday, October 7, 2021

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Number VII

Publishing the Truth, From Good Motives and For Justifiable Ends

The Toast hosts a grand opening in Sadove

by Julia Smith '25
STAFF WRITER

On Friday, Oct. 1, bakery and restaurant The Toast opened at Hamilton College, located in the Sadove Student Center.

Tonya Duffy co-founded The Toast with her daughter, Kylie Gunnip, six and a half years ago in Canastota, New York. The business moved to Cazenovia, N.Y. in Oct. 2020, allowing for a larger menu and an expansion of their wholesale operations. The Toast currently sells baked goods to three cafés in Syracuse, Manlius and Cicero, N.Y.

The new storefront on Hamilton's campus marks The Toast's second location. The College initially reached out to Duffy when Café Opus closed their doors. Fojo Beans was ultimately selected as the replacement, but The Toast and Hamilton remained in contact. Shortly after, the closing of Euphoria Smoothies provided another opportunity for the bakery.

"We're so lucky to have been asked to do this," said Duffy. "It's a beautiful college, and we're super excited to be here."

Duffy started working with Nicole Fuller three weeks ago, and she now manages the on-campus bakery. Though The Toast only recently opened in Sadove, Fuller and Duffy expressed enthusiasm for the Hamilton community. "Everyone's super nice," said Fuller. "All of the staff upstairs are super nice, the bookstore people are nice, Cory the cleaning lady is amazing."

PHOTO COURTESY OF INSTAGRAM: @TOASTONCAMPUS

The Toast shows their new Reuben Sandwich.

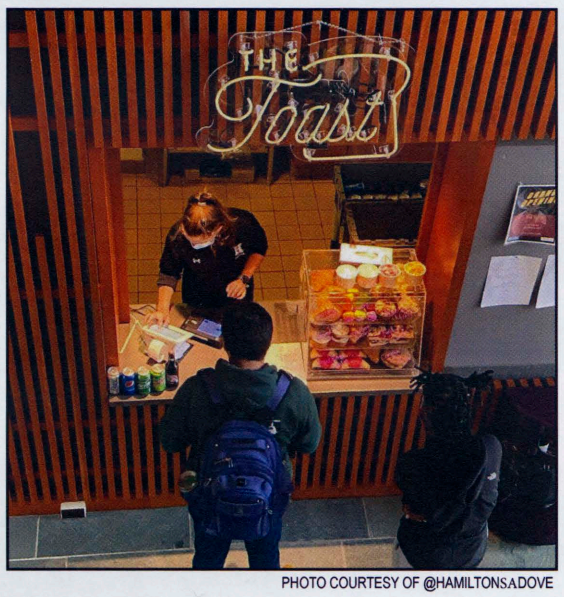

PHOTO COURTESY OF @HAMILTONSADOVE

A student explores the many menu options while ordering at the new Sadove spot.

The Toast is replacing Euphoria Smoothies, which operated on campus for 11 years and announced their closing in late Aug. For some students, the simultaneous loss of Euphoria and Café Opus, long-term fixtures on the Hamilton campus, felt both sad and sudden.

"It's a little jarring," said Caitlin Moehrle '24. "But Hamilton students are adaptable. We'll get right back on track and have it feel like normal hang-out places again."

The Toast's menu has been well-received by students, particularly the panini and pastry options. Duffy's personal favorites are the Reuben panini and PB&J tossed in cinnamon sugar, while Fuller loves the Jive Turkey, which is one of their best-sellers. The bakery also offers vegetarian, vegan and gluten-free options. "There's a little something for everybody." said Duffy.

Many also appreciate the new dining option simply for the community space it provides. "I'm from a bigger town," said Rosie Villa '25. "[At home] we would always go out to restaurants or cafes and just sit together. I like having a space on campus like that where I can get together with friends."

The Toast's opening also offers a sense of normalcy following a difficult year. While the bakery's goods are not included on Hamilton meal plans, the location allows for a greater variety in students' dining options.

"We can just get coffee, or a smoothie or a nice little pastry. They sell paninis, which is fantastic," said Villa. "It also just makes me feel like a college student—going to a cafe on campus on my way to the library."

Duffy and Fuller specifically created the menu for The Toast's on-campus location. Various students are hoping to see an expanded selection soon, which Duffy and Fuller plan on. They aim to introduce grab-and-go options and weekly panini and pizza specials.

"We're going to change it up," said Fuller. "We'll keep them on their toes." The Toast is open Mon.-Fri. from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and Sat.-Sun. from 12:00 p.m. to 4:00p.m.

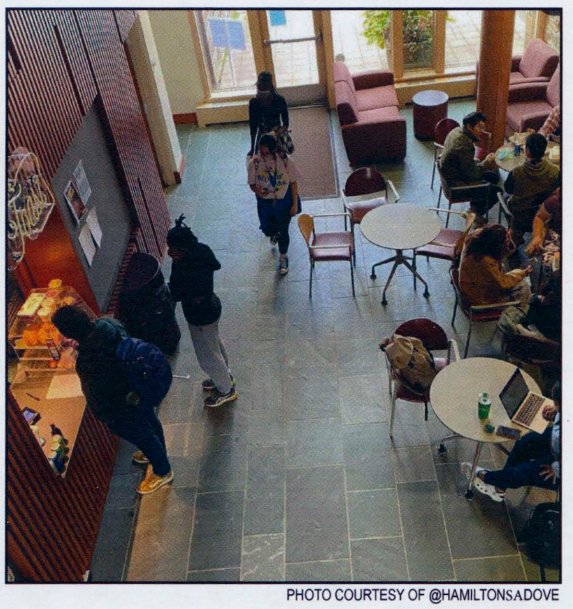

PHOTO COURTESY OF @HAMILTONSADOVE

Similar to the old Euphoria atmosphere, The Toast offers a spacious seating area for students to gather and eat.

Hamilton celebrates Hispanic Heritage month

by Mady Schiro '25
STAFF WRITER

National Hispanic Heritage Month is a period in the United States where we celebrate Hispanic Americans' culture and contributions. This celebration lasts around a month, extending from Sept. 15 to Oct. 15.

Hispanic Heritage Month began as Hispanic Heritage Week in 1968 under President Lyndon B. Johnson. President Ronald Reagan then extended observation to a month-long period in 1988.

The National Hispanic Heritage Month website highlights Sept. 15 as significant because it is the day Latin American countries Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Guatemala all achieved their independence. In addition, Mexico and Chile celebrate their independence a couple days later (Sept. 16 and 18, respectively) during the observation period.

The website includes prominent Hispanic exhibits and collections, video and audio of famous Hispanic artists as well as informational videos on Hispanic culture and history; highlighting impactful Hispanic creators through a series of photos. On Hamilton's campus, celebrations and events are being organized as well. La Vanguardia, whose mission is "to give a voice to Latinx students and enrich campus diversity," organizes events that encourage discussions about Latinx culture and the community's presence on campus. Their first event for Hispanic Heritage Month was a cooking class in which students made empanadas and arroz con leche.

Furthermore, they promoted and participated in the peaceful march on Tuesday, Sept. 21 around campus to stand in solidarity with the people of Cuba amid the violation of their human rights.

The organization emphasized in an email sent out that "there is no way we can begin Hispanic Heritage Month without raising awareness on what is happening in Cuba." La Vanguardia also hosted two concerts so far, featuring Adita Encarnación and Nano Stern. They also celebrated Hispanic music and culture by hosting the Latin Ball.

In addition to the special events planned by La Vanguardia, *Red Weather* Literary Magazine gave out over 20 book recommendations on Instagram that highlight Hispanic voices, ranging from fiction to nonfiction to poetry. Examples include the fiction novels *In the Time of Butterflies* by Julia Álvarez, *Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe* by Benjamin Alire Sàenz and *the poetry book Twenty Love Poems and a Song of Despair* by Pablo Neruda.

Additionally, the Wellin Museum of Art will also honor Hispanic Heritage Month through their event titled "Wellin Celebrates Latinx Art," which will occur on Wednesday, Oct. 6. The museum has promoted the event as a celebration of the presence of Latinx art on campus, as well as Latinx history and culture.

Works of art by Latinx creators will be featured, all curated by Malik Irish, Alejandro Medina and Fatima Oliva. The event will consist of conversations and discussion about and inspired by the art pieces. The event is also co-organized by the Black and Latinx Student Union, La Vanguardia and the Wellin Museum.

The Connect Team's Identity Team at the Career Center will also host an event in celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month. The virtual event is entitled, "Navigating the Workplace as Hispanic/Latine" and will feature three Hispanic/Latine alumni in discussion of their experiences in their respective professional fields in relation to their identity.

The alumni are Annel Monsalvo '17, Park Ranger in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Maria Saenz '19, Assistant Program Manager and Scholar & Alumni Engagement at A Better Chance and Karianna Torres '20, Strategic Communications Associate at Breakwater Strategy.

These events during Hispanic Heritage Month, from a multitude of organizations and clubs on campus, provide the opportunity to celebrate the rich history of Hispanic culture, facilitate important discussions and create safe spaces for the Hispanic community on campus to celebrate and honor their identity.

Hamilton Outing Club takes on the 46 Peaks

by Brian Seiter '23
STAFF WRITER

The 46 Peaks are the 46 tallest mountains of New York State; each of them standing around or over 4,000 feet tall. They are located in the High Peaks region of the Adirondack Park. For nearly decades now, the Hamilton Outing Club (HOC) has tackled the challenge of attempting to climb these 46 high peaks in one weekend. This past weekend marked the continuation of this tradition after last year's trips had to be cancelled due to COVID restrictions.

Two of the HOC organizers, Zach Weller '23 and Charlie Guterman '22, spoke about the administrative side of organizing, preparing and eventually leading the trips. This year, 21 trips set out to reach the high peaks of the Adirondacks. While this number is less than past years, HOC officer Weller told *the Spectator* that "although we only summited 21 peaks this year, 46 Peaks Weekend for us is about getting people hiking in the Adirondacks and we were able to do just that." While Weller was unable to actually go on a trip himself, he had a massive role in planning, coordinating and checking in with the various trips that went out over the weekend.

Guterman spoke more specifically about the chaotic administrative side of organizing the weekend. Speaking to the difficulty of planning the transportation and individual trips, Guterman shared that on Monday, Sept. 27, over "one hundred people came to the Glen House back porch to sign up for hikes—it was a pretty hectic event, lots of coordinating schedules and answering questions." Amidst this excited environment, Guterman, Weller and the other HOC officers were able to coordinate and successfully dispatch all 21 different trips across the Adirondacks. Guterman and other trip leaders, Jack Nelson '23 and Dylan Forest Staack Morse '22, spoke about their own specific experiences leading these trips.

Guterman led a trip to Mt. Phelps, the 32nd highest peak in New York State. Speaking about the details of the trip, she explained that "it was a pretty mild trip, about nine miles in total. We got lucky with the weather, it was a little misty." Guterman also spoke about the great connections the trip fostered, saying "it was great to meet new people, especially underclassmen, because with Covid there wasn't a lot of cross-year connection in the past semesters."

Morse led a trip to Algonquin Mountain in North Elba, New York. He spoke about the organizational side of leading the trip, explaining, "we had an itinerary and plan made up for it. All that was

Continued on Page 3

left for us was to gather our group as well as our safety gear, clothing, and food for the trip and to ensure everyone packed rain gear as well as other warm gear for the peak." He stated that "the hike out is super simple [...] It's five miles out five miles back, but the trail conditions sucked (lots of rain). But other than that the hike went well!"

Nelson set out to lead a trip on Giant Mountain, one of the harder hikes amongst the 46 peaks. He told the Spectator that he was looking for a challenging hike to lead his friends on and that Giant Mountain seemed perfect for the occasion.

"Honestly, I had no idea I was going to have to do so much preparation work. We had to come up with a time we planned on leaving, make sure everyone had adequate gear, and make sure everyone had a solid expectation as to what the hike would be like," Nelson said. Nelson was able to conquer this stressful and extensive preparation and had a great hike. The fog impaired the views this peak usually offers, Nelson reported, but it also enhanced the climbing experience. "There was definitely a tradeoff. Overall we all came away feeling like we'd want to do more hikes in the future."

Two participants on Nelson's trip, Carter Myers-Brown '24 and Brooks Bradford '23 echoed the same sentiments of a rewarding challenge that Nelson spoke of. Myers-Brown stated, "it was wet and foggy and the trail started off pretty gradual for about a mile and a half, then it got pretty steep, certainly a good, sweat inducing climb." Bradford echoed this, reporting that "despite some capricious weather and near-constant cloud cover, we had a few moments where the trees parted, the skies cleared, and the entire valley opened up in a fall blanket of crimson and gold as far as the eye could see. Such moments make an early wake-up and long drive endlessly repeatable."

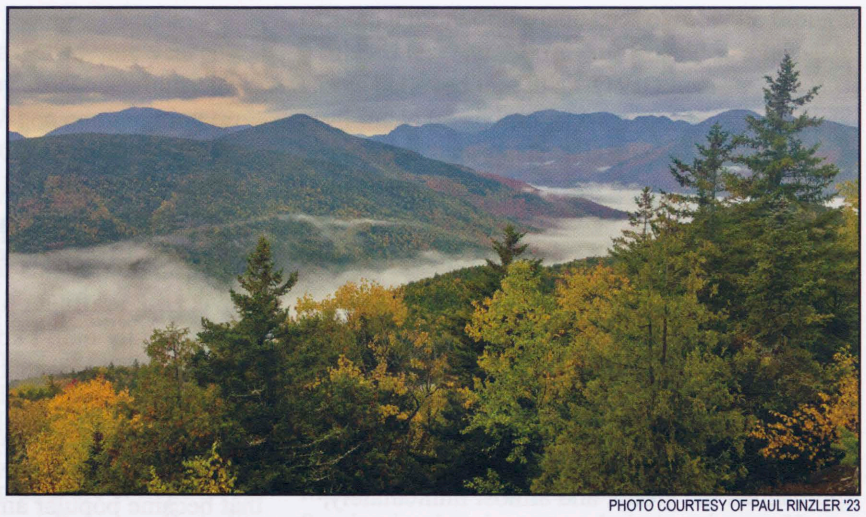

PHOTO COURTESY OF PAUL RINZLER '23

Students reach an impressive altitude above the cloud level.

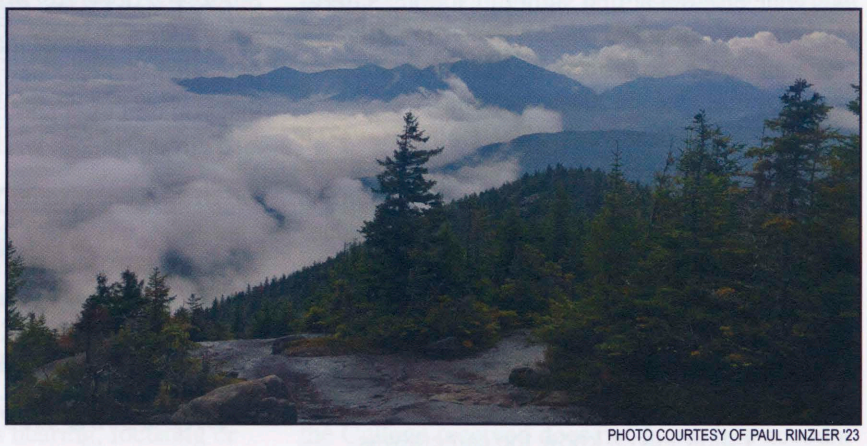

PHOTO COURTESY OF PAUL RINZLER '23

The summit of Giant Mountain boasts a picturesque ADK view.

Campus Safety Incident Report

In an effort to respect discretion, *The Spectator* and Campus Safety have not disclosed the idenities of the students involved in these reports.

Thursday, Sept. 30

8:30 a.m. Medical Emergency – 1 Anderson Road

11:02 a.m. Parking Complaint – 95 College Hill Road

1:37 p.m. Motorist Assist – Athletic Center

3:21 p.m. Area Check – Babbitt Residence Hall

4:55 p.m. Medical Emergency – Babbitt Residence Hall

7:44 p.m. Noise Complaint – Babbitt Residence Hall

8:35 p.m. Complaint – Babbitt Residence Hall

Friday, Oct. 1

12:20 a.m. Area Check – Burke Library

9:09 a.m. Parking Complaint – C.A. Johnson

1:21 p.m. Animal Complaint – Campus Safety Building

4:23 p.m. Motor Vehicle Accident – Commons Dining Hall

4:39 p.m. Area Check – Elihu Root House

6:20 p.m. Area Check – Facilities Management

8:37 p.m. Assist – Ferguson House

10:33 p.m. Medical Emergency – Ferguson House

Saturday Oct. 2

1:35 a.m. Odor of Marijuanna – Ferguson House

10:22 a.m. Motorist Assist – Griffin Road Apartments

2:29 p.m. Medical Emergency – Johnson Center for Health and Wellness

4:41 p.m. Assist – Johnson Center for Health and Wellness

8:13 p.m. Motor Vehicle Accident – Keehn Residence Hall

9:09 p.m. KJ – Area Check

9:25 p.m. KJ – Noise Complaint

9:29 p.m. KJ – Odor of Marijuanna

Sunday Oct. 3

1:50 a.m. Medical Emergency – McEwen Dining Hall

7:47 a.m. Parking Complaint – McEwen Dining Hall

7:23 p.m. Area Check – McIntosh Residence Hall

Monday, Oct. 4

12:08 a.m. Concern for Welfare – McIntosh Residence Hall

9:05 a.m. Concern for Welfare – Minor Residence Hall

10:28 a.m. Medical Emergency – North Campus

12:01 p.m. Medical Emergency – Off-Campus

5:41 p.m. Trouble Alarm – Off-Campus

7:47 p.m. Medical Emergency – On-Campus

10:48 p.m. Medical Emergency – On-Campus

Tuesday Oct. 5

11:41 a.m. Medical Emergency – On-Campus

1:37 p.m. Animal Complaint – Parking Lots

4:12 p.m. Area Check – Root Residence Hall

4:29 p.m. Assist – Skenandoa Residence Hall

6:45 p.m. Parking Complaint – South Campus

8:28 p.m. Assist – South Campus

Wednesday Oct. 6

12:38 a.m. Animal Complaint – South Residence Hall

1:09 a.m. Fire Alarm – Wallace Johnson Residence Hall

October 7, 2021

A look into Hamilton's 2020-21 COVID-19 Disciplinary Practices

by Eric Moss '24 and Evan Cohen '24
INVESTIGATIVE REPORTERS

On Oct. 2, 2020, James Gallagher '24 was walking back to his room in North Hall when he saw a small group of maskless first-year students gathering outside Commons. He approached the group, and almost immediately, two Campus Safety cars arrived at the scene. As everyone else ran at first sight of Campus Safety, Gallagher remained to comply with the officers. Gallagher gave the officers his Hill Card and thought nothing more of the incident.

Almost four weeks later, Gallagher received a text alleging that he violated the COVID-19 Community Agreement. An email contained dash-cam footage of his interaction with the Campus Safety officer and a video taken from the Commons security camera that zoomed in on Gallagher from 30 yards away, showing his mask on his chin for 57 seconds before placing it back over his face.

"I didn't even know the camera was there," Gallagher said. "The fact that they reviewed security footage, which is meant for a lot more severe things, to jeopardize my enrollment in the semester, was pretty intense."

The hearing, which lasted only around fifteen minutes, found Gallagher responsible for breaking the COVID-19 agreement. "It was a pretty cut and dry case for them," Gallagher said.

This situation was far too familiar for Hamilton students on-campus during the 2020-2021 academic year.

Over the 2020-21 academic year, 422 students were found responsible for breaking the COVID-19 Community Standards Agreement, representing almost a quarter of the student body, with most infractions resulting from a missed COVID test. Additionally, 56 students were removed from campus and forced to attend classes remotely. Of those found responsible for breaching the agreement, nearly 40% were first-years, 65 more students than the next leading class, and 70% identified as male.

The COVID-19 Task Force (specifically the Conduct and Discipline subcommittee) established the new disciplinary practices for the school year in summer 2020, electing to create a new system for COVID-19 related infractions. This new system included Administrative hearings conducted by hearing officers, and a two-step process for infractions. A student's first offense would result in an official warning and parental notification, whereas a second infraction, according to the community agreement, would "result in termination of campus access for the remainder of the semester and removal from campus." Students removed from campus would be forced to leave within 24 hours and would not receive any housing refund. According to Assistant Dean of Students for Student Engagement Travis Hill, drafting this policy "was very hectic […] we really didn't know what to expect. We made a lot of plans that made sense and fit within the guidelines and the rules," said Hill.

The administration fought against the characterization of a "two-strike policy," a phrase that became popular among students. "There is not a two-strike policy," said Director of Campus Safety Frank Coots. Similarly, Hill stated, "we try to push back against that phrasing […] one could have such a severe violation on the first instance that you don't get another opportunity. There are also circumstances where students get more than two opportunities to violate a policy and stay on campus." While protocols were put in place to keep the Hamilton community safe, students, particularly first-years, faced a balance between the excitement of a new college year and the stress of strict disciplinary practices that could result in a student being kicked off campus in a worst-case scenario. As the year progressed, it became clear that COVID-19 infractions disproportionately impacted the Class of 2024. Of those who had a hearing, 37% were first-years, 23% sophomores, 19% juniors and 21% seniors.

"As the year progressed, it became clear that COVID-19 infractions disproportionately impacted the Class of 2024. Of those who had a hearing, 37% were first-years, 23% sophomores, 19% juniors and 21% seniors."

After his hearing, Gallagher expressed that the remainder of the academic year felt dramatically different than it had prior to his experience going through the disciplinary process. "It changed the way I relaxed […] any similar incident could remove me from Hamilton for the semester," said Gallagher. As a member of the track and cross country teams, he held additional concerns, explaining "if I was seen within six feet of somebody on a run, I could get kicked out of the school."

For some first-years, this balance was overwhelming. Anders Baum '24 was excited to begin his college and athletic career by being on-campus and attending in-person classes. However, by the end of the first semester, he decided to finish the academic year at home, as the constant uncertainty and fear of punishment were too much for him. "By choosing to leave early, I definitely felt like I was missing out on new experiences and social connections that come with being a freshman at Hamilton," said Baum.

Baum and Gallagher were not the only students who experienced constant fear of the disciplinary process. Friends and classmates of both of the authors explicitly expressed fear of the disciplinary process in conversations with the authors throughout the 2020-2021 academic year.

"To think that you guys were in fear really bothers me […] it's unfortunate," said Coots. "That was not the intent."

Campus Safety's role dramatically changed at the beginning of the 2020-21 academic year, as they were now responsible for enforcing COVID-19 violations in addition to their regular responsibilities. While the COVID-19 Task Force did not intend for this change going into the year, Coots credits their modified role to the fact that "after 5:00 p.m., there are not a lot of adults on campus. So a lot of [responsibilities] fell to Campus Safety." Additionally, according to Coots, the Campus Safety office operates on a purely reactionary basis, meaning officers only report to a scene when they are called to do so. In the Fall 2020 semester alone, the office received almost 400 calls from students and faculty, which Coots explained to be an overwhelming amount.

Acting COVID-19 Task Force Chair Karen Leach expressed that while not perfect, the rules' rigidity was necessary. Leach acknowledged, "I consider any student going home to be a really unfortunate circumstance, but I don't know how we would change it." Leach felt that in setting policies "the hardest [part] was the decision making with imperfect information." Leach expressed that the Oneida County COVID-19 infection rate was constantly evolving and remained naturally unpredictable. However, as a result, students were subject to a system of absolutes carved out of "imperfect information."

Leach noted, "we [the Task Force] put rules in place because we think it was the best judgement about how to help the community stay safe […] and then people make decisions that are unfortunate."

Travis Hill has held a disciplinary role at the college throughout his committed 18 year tenure. However, during the 2020-2021 school year, he saw his role change. Taking an active role in conducting COVID-19 related student hearings, Hill described himself as having been "essentially the prosecutor on the part of the College."

In retrospect, Hill thought that "the first semester [Fall 2020] was just particularly harsher than the second semester." In the Spring 2021 semester, only nine students were removed from campus, a near 80 percent difference from the 47 students sent home in the fall. This change was

PHOTO BY COLE KUCZEK '23

due in part to the loosening of certain COVID-19 restrictions, such as being allowed in other dorms. Hill also accredited this dramatic drop to an adapted approach to the disciplinary process. "What I feel like happened, which is not typical, is that we really looked at our policies mid year, which we try not to do," Hill stated.

Hill explained that during the Spring 2021 semester, administrators overseeing the hearing process "were given permission to put context into consideration based on how things shifted between semesters […] because in the first semester, there really wasn't much discretion, and therefore not a lot of room for context." However, the consequences of this strategy resulted in severe inconsistencies among punishments administered for different students accused of the same infraction across the two semesters.

Current infractions under the Hamilton College Fall 2021 COVID-19 policy operate under the standard disciplinary point system. A first-time COVID offense will be met with two disciplinary points, and a second-time offense will be given three points.

Therefore, a first-time COVID infraction is now the numerical equivalent of being caught with an open container (alcoholic beverage) or first-time marajuana use, behavior that is universally expected of college students. In the academic year 2020-21, the penalty associated with the majority of COVID infractions was being sent home, a punishment normally only administered upon receiving a much more severe penalty of upwards of nine points.

"The penalty associated with the majority of COVID infractions was being sent home, a punishment normally only administered upon receiving a much more severe penalty of upwards of nine points."

Hill reflected on last academic year that he was very impressed by students' ability to adapt to a new normal. When commenting on the formulation of the COVID disciplinary practices from last year, Hill noted, "Speaking for myself, I thought, knowing how college students are and having worked with college students for many, many years, people complying to such rules seemed highly unlikely."

Given that the perception regarding COVID-19 disciplinary practices from the outset was that they could be expected to be administered as frequently as perhaps penalties for alcohol use, what explains the college's ease in mass-administering a penalty normally befitting an extreme, nine point offense? According to Hill, "knowing that you could stay on track academically [through remote instruction], even though it certainly would have an effect on your experience academically, made it to me seem like less of a consequence."

In offering the option of remote learning, the College acted as though they were assigning a lower penalty. However, a spring 2021 *Spectator* investigation found that students who studied remotely during the 2020-21 school year had lower GPAs and fewer credit hours than their in-person counterparts. Remote students also reported facing difficulties hearing, focusing or interacting with fellow students in hybrid classes and academic accommodations were offered only on a case by case basis. In an extended effort to put into place COVID protection protocols in the Spring semester, the College changed the weekly testing amount for students from twice a week to three times a week. This provided the campus with a constant flow of test results, but it also provided students with an extra opportunity to receive the dreaded text or email informing them that they had been reported to the Community Standards Office for a missed test.

Kate Bondarenko '24, an international student from Russia, missed a COVID-19 test last academic year. As she was new to campus, she expressed, "I didn't even think it was a big deal." Given the many obstacles Bondarenko faced in acquiring a visa during the pandemic, the potential of being sent home was "really scary," and "very stressful," she stated. Coots offered a more optimistic take on how he thought a missed test situation would unfold in a hearing. Coots believed that in a COVID hearing, "everything is taken into its own merits, all the facts are judged." However, this reveals a potential misunderstanding between the head of Campus Safety, the enforcers of the rules, and administrative hearing officers who held a different view. As Hill explained, "things like a missed test are pretty straightforward […] there's not really a lot of opportunity to express a lot of context[…] you missed the test or you didn't."

However, some students were not afforded the opportunity of a hearing. Rebecca Mathews, a visiting international student from Scotland, missed a test early in her time at Hamilton. Instead of a notice for a scheduled hearing, Matthews received a letter stating, "due to the nature of the violation and the clarity of the incident it may not be necessary to hold a hearing. As a result, I am issuing you a COVID Warning." It was a closed case.

Throughout all of last year, the College focused on ensuring student health and well-being. However, in practice, students expressed that this approach dramatically altered the Hamilton student experience in ways that they did not anticipate. While the College largely succeeded in maintaining low levels of COVID-19, the praise the College received does not factor into account the on-campus experience. For many, there were severe costs associated with the policies of last year, as they created unhealthy relationships, fostered hostile environments and left students constantly looking over their shoulders. One consequence was the exacerbation of tension between students and Campus Safety officers, as Coots acknowledged that "it's been dramatically different, the lack of respect that some students have displayed when it comes to Campus Safety."

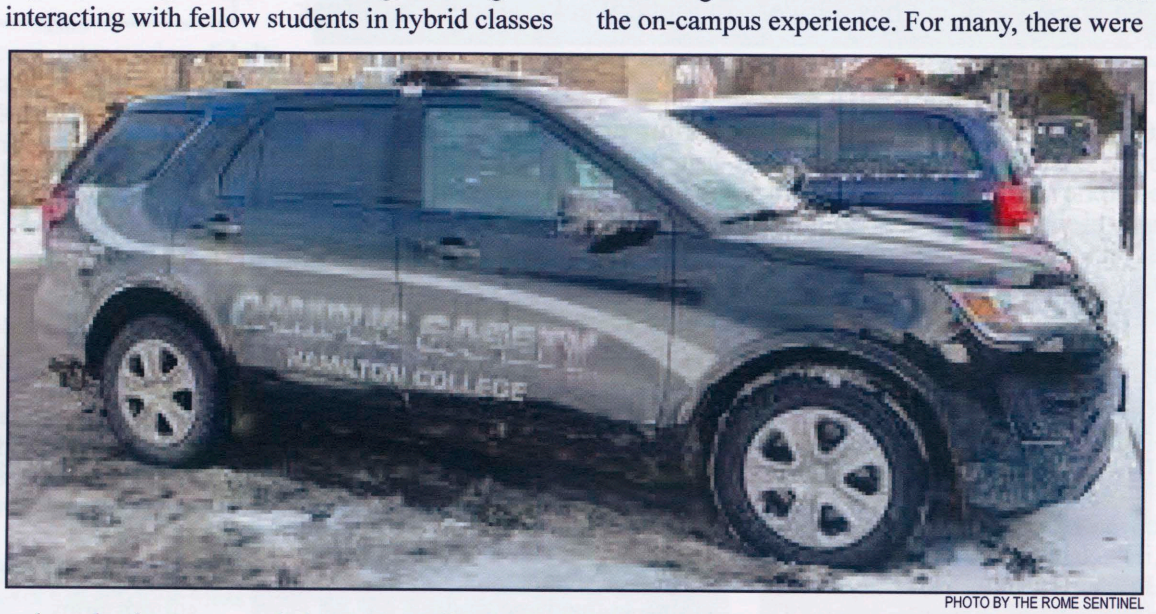

PHOTO BY THE ROME SENTINEL

Another consequence was a fear of participating in-person for academics, extracurriculars and social activities. Former COVID-19 Task Force Student Representative Eric Cortes-Kopp '22 asked of himself "why am I even here?" when considering his inability to see close friends or attend all in-person classes without fearing disciplinary consequences.

As Coots said of students, "I think it's never healthy to live in fear."

Hi parents!

For those who have not visited the Hill, welcome! For those who have, welcome back! We at *The Spectator* are so glad to have our first Parents' Weekend since the 2019-20 year and hope you all take time to read through our latest issue. Last year we did not print at all due to the pandemic, so we all are so happy to be back in the newsroom and printing.

As some keen-eyed parents may notice, *The Spectator* looks different since the 2019-20 year. We recently switched to a new printer, PJ Green, who has not only been amazing to work with, but delivers an amazing product to us every week. Unfortunately, the new look is not the typical newspaper format, but is much more environmentally-friendly and (we think ;)) still looks quite nice.

We are both so excited to be back in the Media Suite laying out our paper with *The Spec*'s fantastic editorial team. If any parents reading this have interest in a subscription service—where we would email you the paper in pdf form (possibly even before it is released in print...shhh…) please let us know! Our email address is spec@hamilton.edu, and we would love to hear from you!

We hope everyone has a lovely Parents' Weekend and Fall Break.

Best,
Cole and Emma Mae, Editors-in-Chief

The Spectator

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Celebrating 173 years, we were first published as The Radiator *in 1848.*

The Spectator's Letter to the Editor section is designed to be a forum for the entire Hamilton community to discuss and debate campus, local, national, and global issues. Pieces published in the section express the opinion of the individual writers and are not necessarily the opinions of *The Spectator*, its editors or the Media Board.

Letters to the Editor are welcome from all students, alumni/ae, faculty, friends of the college, and Hamilton community members.

The Spectator has the following policies for submission:

1. Submissions are due by 10:00 p.m. on the Monday before publication. The editors reserve the right to refuse any late submissions.
2. Letters should be no longer than 500 words. The editors reserve the right to cut off letters at 500 words.
3. Letters submitted anonymously will not be printed.
4. *The Spectator* reserves the right not to publish any letter it deems inappropriate for publication.
5. If a piece is determined to be libelous, an unwarranted invasion of privacy, or an unnecessary and/or unwarranted ad hominem or personal attack, it will not be published.

About Us

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Hamilton Horoscopes

by Mariam Saied '23
Resident Astrologist

Retrograde Edition

As you all should know by now, Mercury is in retrograde in Libra until Oct. 18. Mercury is the planet of intellect and communication, though, the effect that its retrograde has on each sign is largely dependent on which house the transit falls in for each sign. Let's unpack that.

Jan. 20-Feb. 18: Aquarius
February 19-March 20: Pisces
March 21-April 19: Aries
April 20-May 20: Taurus
May 21-June 20: Gemini
June 21-July 22: Cancer
July 23-August 22: Leo
August 23-Sept. 22: Virgo
Sept. 23-Oct. 22: Libra
Oct.23-Nov. 21: Scorpio
Nov. 22-Dec. 21: Sagittarius
Dec. 22-Jan. 19: Capricorn

Aries

Don't Aries your relationships up this retrograde. It falls in your seventh house, the house of partnerships. Even the best of intentions can get scrambled, so think deeply before you act and communicate with those you love. Don't make people guess what you need, you'll never be satisfied that way.

Taurus

Focus in on your well-being right now. Mercury is turning retrograde in your sixth house of health, organization and self-care. Stress levels may be high and as a fixed sign it probably feels like the end of the world when you fall out of your routines. If you work on managing your stress levels you'll be thriving. Stay hydrated and well-rested, bestie.

Gemini

Not only is Mercury turning retrograde in your fifth house, but Gemini itself is ruled by Mercury. The effects of this retrograde hit you harder than most. With the fifth house ruling love and creativity, you need to be prepared for things to go sideways in those areas. Mercury retrogrades are notorious for bringing exes back, but if that happens to you don't feel like you have to take their bait. Good luck out there.

Cancer

Trouble at home, Cancer? This retrograde is turning in your fourth house, the house of the home. Things could get a little bit dicey in the environment where you feel the most safe. Ride out any storms and don't give petty arguments your time. If something feels off, try to pinpoint what (or who) and remove them from your space.

Leo

As if Mercury retrogrades didn't mess with communication enough, this one falls in your house of communication! This twisted third house energy you have may trouble holding your tongue during this transit. Try to postpone important work calls or emotionally combustible conversations until Mercury goes direct. Just be quiet this one time.

Virgo

This retrograde is turning in your second house, the house of finances. Oy vey. Virgo is another mercury ruled sign so, this retrograde is extra tough for you. Try to be proactive when it comes to potential fiscal and security issues. Things could get quite messy.

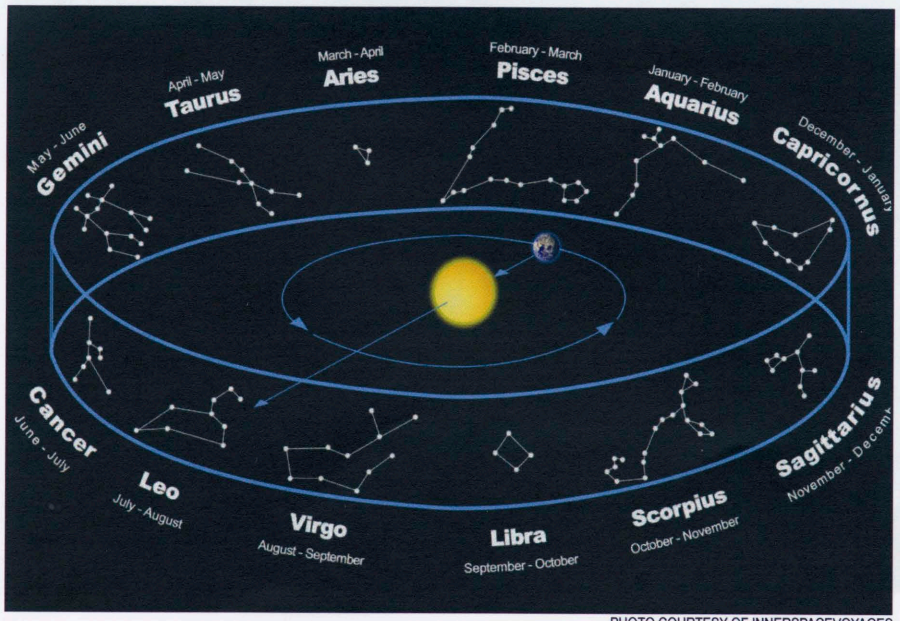

PHOTO COURTESY OF INNERSPACEVOYAGES

PHOTO COURTESY OF MARIAM SAIED '23

Libra

Not only is Mercury turning retrograde in your sign, but the transit is falling in your first house! The house of the self! At the same time, though, the Sun is in your sign. You may be hyper-aware of how people perceive you right now, channeling that energy into curating your personal brand could help you alleviate some stress. You have more agency than you think, Libra!

Scorpio

This is an intense retrograde for you, Scorpio. Mercury is turning in your unconscious and imaginative 12th house! Surface level conversations aren't worth your time right now, it's time to get introspective and focus on the deeper things. Saving your words for moments when they seem to have real value will allow you more time to develop your listening skills.

Sagittarius

Mercury is moving backward through your 11th house of networking and teamwork, making it likely that old friends and colleagues may suddenly resurface. The way this plays out is dependent on you. You're usually all in and let your unfiltered wit loose in group settings, but maybe take a second and think a little bit more before you speak. This is prime time for people you work with to take things the wrong way.

Capricorn

Patience is key this retrograde, Capricorn! You might face some major difficulties in the workplace as Mercury spins retrograde in your professional 10th house. Don't bite off more than you can chew. Adjust plans that might not be as realistic as they once seemed. Review, revise, repeat! At the same time, don't let people assume that your flexibility means they can walk all over you.

Aquarius

If you have any trips coming up between now and Oct. 18, make "Hi, just confirming!" your new mantra. This retrograde falls in your ninth house, which rules travel. If you don't have concrete plans, maybe hold off until Mercury goes direct to make some. If that's not an option, however, double-check (even triple-check) everything! Smooth sailing is possible if you run a tight ship.

Pisces

Honey, you're gonna want to take a seat for this one. This transit falls in the secretive and emotionally intense eighth house. You think and speak in beautiful, poetic ways, and while I love you for that, a lot of people may not be a fan of it during this retrograde. Try not to get lost in the strong feelings you experience, but instead take some deep breaths and stop to observe them.

watchingthehill

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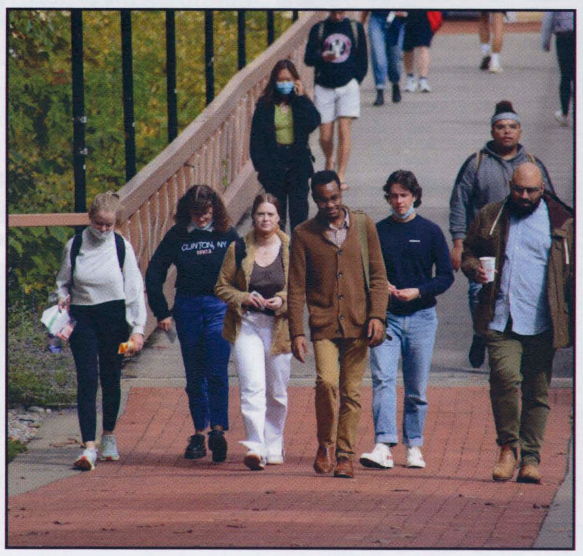
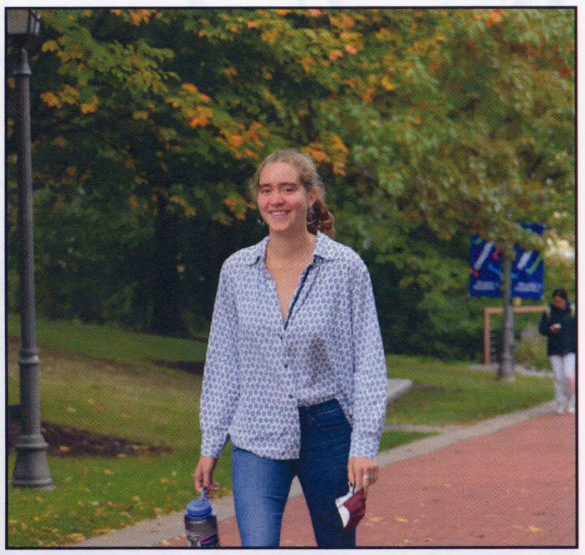
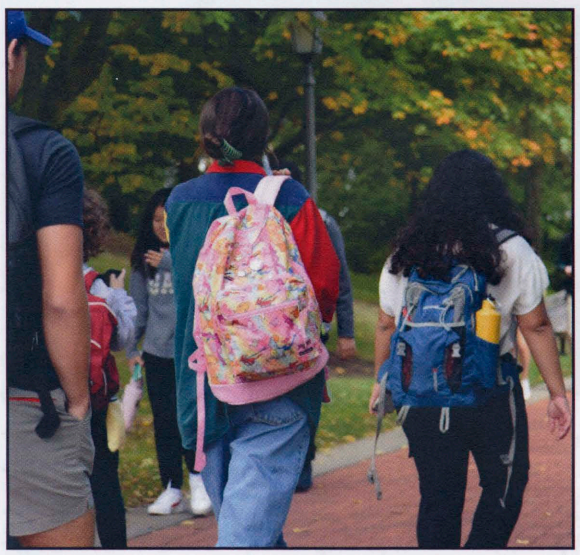
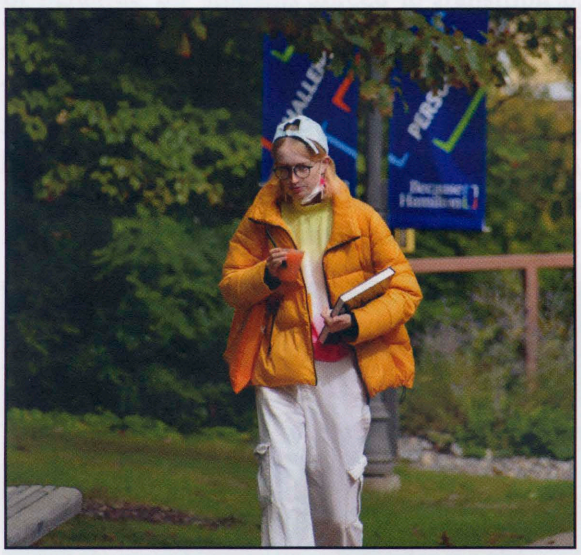
Huzair Latif

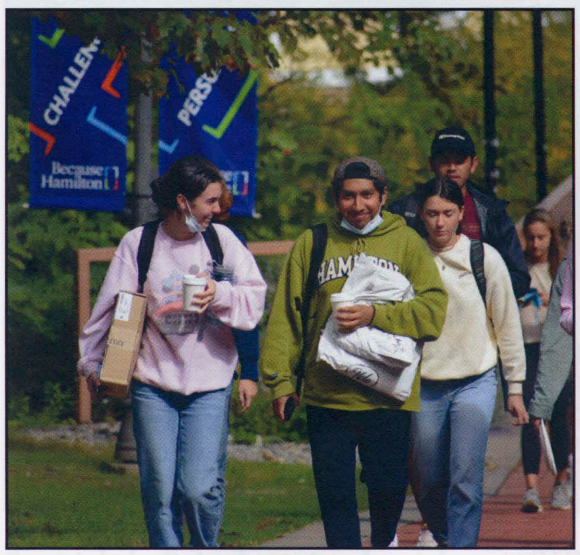
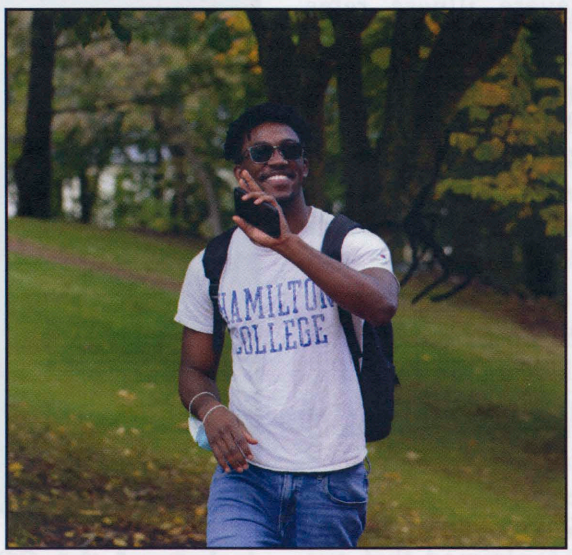
Photographer

This is a photo project paying homage to @watchingnewyork and to the stylish students of Hamilton College, candidly photographed along Martin's Way at the start of the Fall.





Despite conflicting communication, the FDA is right about the boosters

by Aliana Potter '24
OPINION CONTRIBUTOR

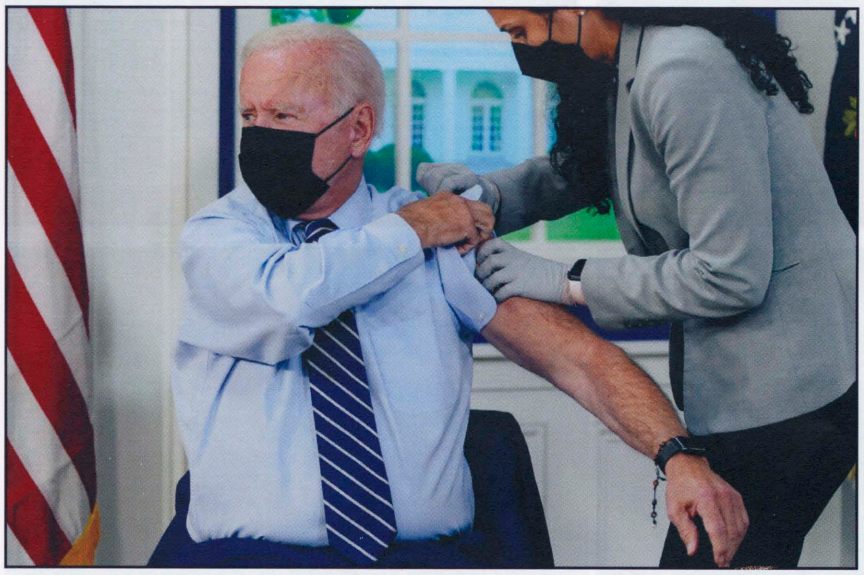


PHOTO BY NPR

Joe Biden receiving his booster shot of the COVID vaccine.

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented the world with difficult and unprecedented decisions, and the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) and Center for Disease Control (CDC) are no exceptions. Over the course of the pandemic, both federal agencies have declared rulings that have been widely controversial and sometimes hard to defend. The most recent controversial pandemic decision, however, lies at the FDA's feet.

In Aug. 2021, the Biden administration announced that a third booster vaccine shot preventing COVID-19 would be available to the general public in mid-Sept. These vaccine boosters were encouraged after studies in Israel showed large drops in vaccine efficacy over time. However, on Sept. 17, just three days before the shots were set to be widely available, the FDA—to great surprise—voted against this policy. The FDA has admittedly approved booster shots for high risk populations, including the elderly and immunocompromised, who remain vulnerable even after their second shot. The FDA found that even though the booster may not greatly improve herd immunity, an added third shot will significantly decrease hospitalization and severe illness rates in these groups–a vital tradeoff in the booster decisions.

Though the most recent declaration from the FDA does not necessarily require Biden to scrap his booster plans, this decision has still garnered a great deal of negative attention. Despite these complaints, it is clear that the FDA has made the right decision. By challenging Biden's policy, the FDA has instead sided with the World Health Organization and well-known science journals, two groups that have opposed Western hoarding of the COVID-19 vaccine. Their claims are backed up by substantial evidence and concern over a growing global vaccine inequity. Large, wealthy countries like the United States have plenty of vaccines, while poorer countries are struggling to procure even first doses for their population. Only 20% of eligible citizens in lower-income countries are vaccinated, compared to a staggering 80% in wealthier countries. The FDA claimed that expanding global access to primary vaccines will do more to mitigate the pandemic than providing third boosters to the American public would. Additionally, the FDA noted that even with waning protections against infection, vaccines will continue to do their primary job of decreasing severity of illness for the infected. Some economists and healthcare officials even added that the United States may not even be able to logistically handle widespread availability of a third dose, given current supply-chain issues and general worker shortages. Finally, the FDA also highlighted concerns about safety and efficacy data on third boosters in the general population: the only data on their usage comes from studies by Israeli sources, not the CDC.

On the other side of the debate, critics doubt the value of using American funds to vaccinate other countries before triple-protecting its own citizens. They note the record case numbers and lack of available hospital beds as reasons to improve protection amongst Americans. Today, there is still much confusion looming over the booster shot communication. President Biden himself has received his third shot, yet only because he falls into the elderly category. Consequently, governors have begun to step into the communications void and clarify Biden's lack of explanation for the conflicting reports. This debacle has highlighted fundamental disagreements within Biden's own government. What this debate does not show is a departure from Biden's belief in science. Scientific truth is not at the center of this debate, as both sides are backed up with strong evidence. Rather, the decision hanging in balance is whether global human rights or nationalism should govern our vaccine policy, which is truly not a hard decision to make. It is in the interest of both national and global health for wealthy countries to increase global availability of vaccines, lest we prolong this pandemic by refusing to do so.

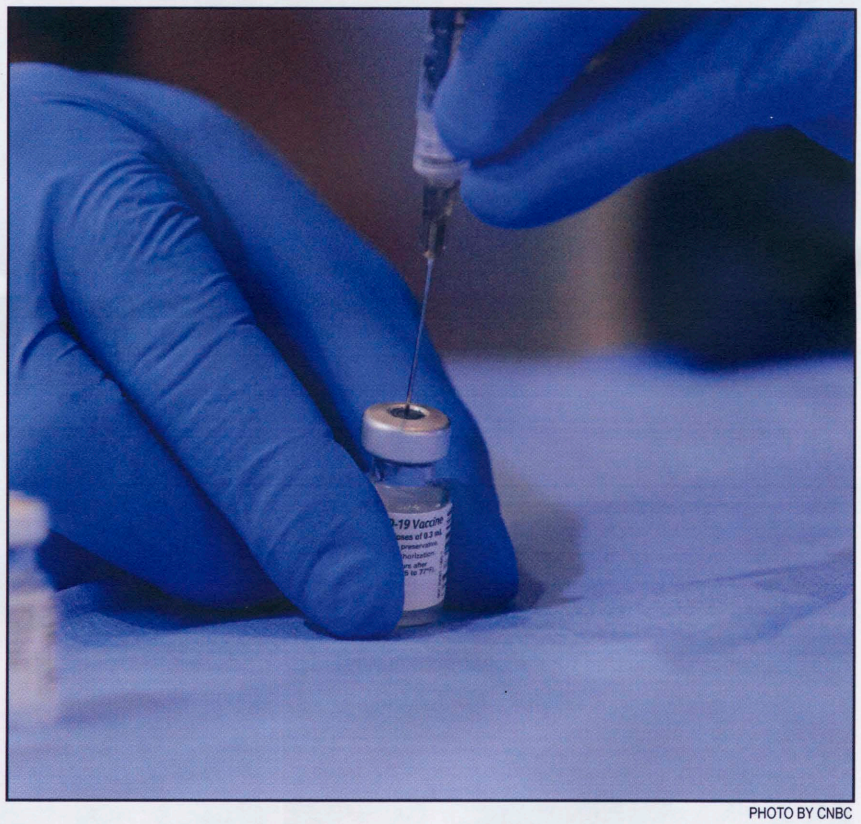


PHOTO BY CNBC

A dose of the COVID vaccine about to be administered.

Quarantined students need more support from the Administration

by Nicolette van Kesteren '23
OPINION CONTRIBUTOR

PHOTO BY AGODA

The Homewood Suites, where postive students are placed for 10 days.

I lost a week of learning during my time in quarantine. The discomfort of my quarantine living was amplified by Hamilton's lack of planning for students forced to transition back into remote learning. I was plucked from my room and placed into a hotel for ten days without any tools to help me successfully continue my academics.

From a quarantined student's perspective, the school has decided to test students for COVID without preparing for what would happen if those results came back positive. Yes, they have beds, bathrooms and kitchens for positive students to use. However, there are no systems in place to make sure those students are able to attend their classes and keep up with their work. Upon arrival at the hotel, I was given no support or information about what to do in terms of my academics, and instead was told to contact my professors myself.

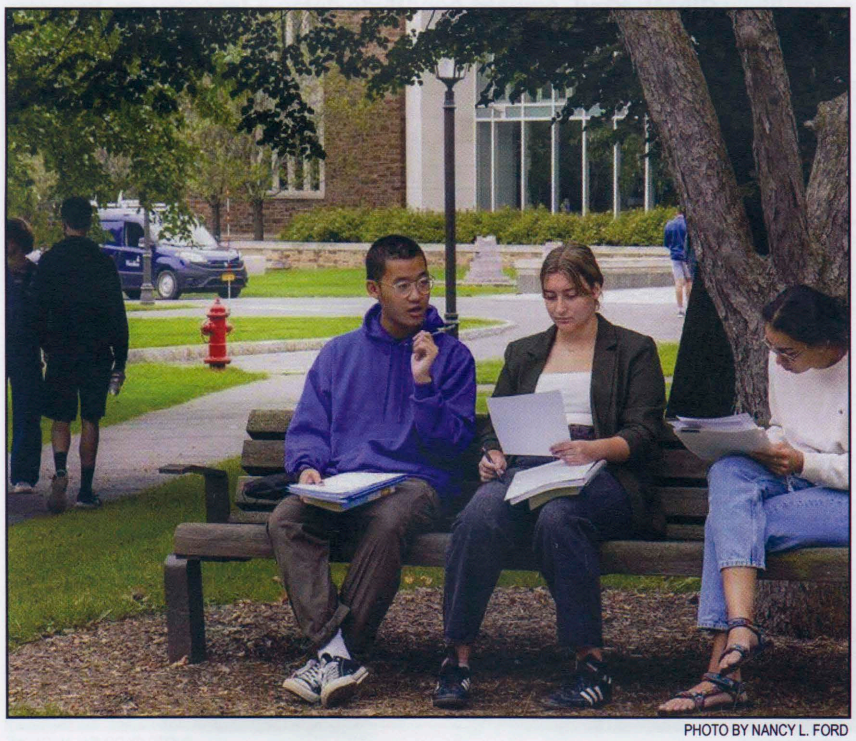


PHOTO BY NANCY L. FORD

Students collaborating on work outside of the Science Center.

PHOTO BY NANCY L. FORD

Students attend an in-person, socially-distanced class in the Filius Events Barn, one of the event spaces-turned-classroms.

Not all of my professors have the ability to conduct a hybrid class, as I found that I was only able to attend two out of four of my classes. In my remote classes, the professors no longer had the proper equipment for Zoom that was provided last semester, and I was unable to hear or participate in those classes. I did not learn in those Zoom classes, and found myself feeling even more disconnected and isolated from campus life. It became my responsibility to receive notes from my peers and learn the material in my own time. Increasingly, I fell behind.

Since the campus is fully in-person this year, when positive students use Zoom to continue to attend their classes, their privacy as patients can no longer be respected. Unlike last year, they can no longer hide amongst the other faces occupying the screen, and instead it becomes blatantly obvious who the student is and why they are using Zoom. My professors were incredibly receptive to my predicament of losing a week of school during my time in quarantine, and were happy to meet with me one-on-one. During those meetings, they tried to catch me up on the work that I have missed. However, it is impossible to simulate the same kind of discussion that a full class experiences with just a professor. I do not blame my professors for struggling to deal with a remote student, since they were not given the proper guidance and tools from the administration, but I was still missing the conversations and information that my peers were receiving during their time in class.

One of the other students that tested positive this year shared their experience in quarantine with me, and they also found the school incredibly unhelpful in terms of academics. The student, who wishes to remain anonymous, said "luckily, it was the start of school and I did not have many projects. However, many of my professors did not offer [the option] to take classes on Zoom... Teachers were mixed [in their responses]: some were very accommodating while I was in the Q, while others did not make accommodations." If the school is going to continue testing students, and put those who test positive into isolation, these issues need to be addressed immediately. Losing a week of school in a semester consisting of only 15 weeks can be detrimental to a student's grades and cause unnecessary stress while catching up. It should not be the student's responsibility to catch up in their classes. Rather, the school should put better systems in place to make sure these students do not fall behind.

Film Club Horror Fest, Week 1: *House* (1977)

by Anne Rong '24
A&E CONTRIBUTOR

On Saturday, Oct. 2 in the Taylor Science Center, the Hamilton College Film Club began their month-long endeavor to showcase different sub-genres of cinematic horror in celebration of the buildup to Halloween. This past weekend featured a poll of horror classics curated by Film Club President Katherine Kim '22, including *Suspiria* (1977), *Carrie* (1976) and *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* (1974). The student body ultimately elected to watch Nobuhiko Ōbayashi's *House* (1977), an experimental Japanese film that has become a cult favorite of horror buffs across the world.

House's narrative focuses on Gorgeous, a Japanese schoolgirl, who finds out that her widowed father will be remarrying soon. Unable to stay in her home and face the changes in her family, Gorgeous abruptly decides to visit her ailing aunt—her late mother's only living relative—and invites six of her classmates to join her: the clever Prof, the musical Melody, the athletic Kung Fu, the gluttonous Mac, the thoughtful Sweet and the daydreaming Fantasy. When the girls arrive at the aunt's place, they are in awe of its antiquated decor and the lush nature that surrounds it. Thinking they have stumbled into paradise, all of them happily start to settle into the house by preparing dinner and playing games. Unbeknownst to them, Gorgeous's aunt and her house are not what they seem, and one by one, the girls slowly start to discover that they have unwittingly entered into a terrifying place that wants them dead.

There were multiple occasions throughout Saturday's screening when laughter unexpectedly escaped from the audience. While *House* is a horror film, Ōbayashi was inspired by his pre-teen daughter and her childhood fears, such as—spoiler alert—her fingers getting caught in between her piano keys, or a watermelon being pulled out of a well and becoming a human head. The childlike absurdity of these images, in tandem with Ōbayashi's ability to construct them in such a way that terrifies the audience, is what gives *House* its reputation as a timeless experimental horror film and even earned Ōbayashi's daughter a writing credit.

Ōbayashi's direction was crucial in establishing *House* as the horror classic it is today. He reportedly intended the special effects to look unrealistic, as if a child had created them. He undoubtedly succeeded in the unrealistic element; there were a number of moments during Saturday's screening that raised eyebrows, including but not limited to the choppy martial arts segments or the sudden animation of a cat painting leaping out of its frame and meowing ominously. Once again, students were unsure of what to make of the images on the screen and nervously laughed, but all of them enjoyed the confusion nonetheless.

PHOTO BY IMDB

Gorgeous and her friends meet Gorgeous's mysterious aunt.

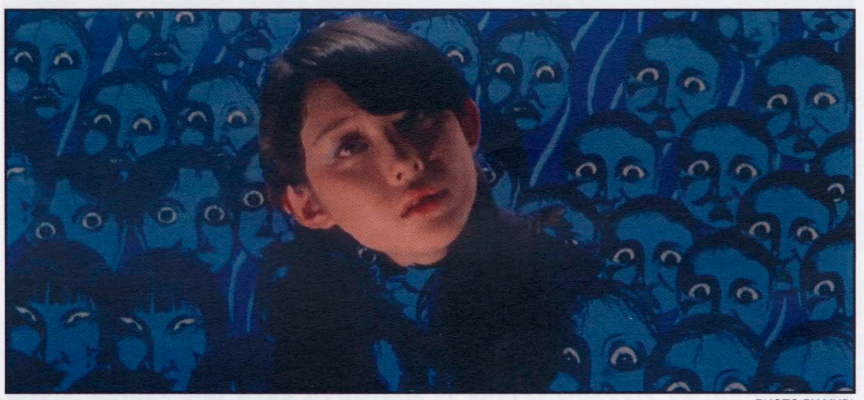


PHOTO BY MUBI

By the end of the film, the audience was left bewildered and impressed at the teenage girl's one-and-a-half-hour long fever dream. Though disorienting, terrifying and at times unbelievably funny, *House* remains an iconic classic emblem of Japanese horror, while also taking leaps into new special effects and a young, female point of view to expand the horror genre as a whole. Ōbayashi's work was a chilling yet warm welcome into Oct. and a perfect introduction to the month of horror that the Hamilton Film Club has in store.

For those interested in attending one of the Hamilton Film Club's Oct. screenings, the club meets every Saturday this month at 2 p.m. in room G027 in the Taylor Science Center.

PHOTO BY COVEAL MAGAZINE

The frightening amd disturbing cat painting that can be seen in the aunt's house, which morphs into an ominous motif later in the film.

October 7, 2021

Netflix Series *Squid Game* (2021): An Unflinching Critque and Allegory of Capitalism

by Katherine Kim '22
A&E EDITOR

Warning: major spoilers for the show below.

By now, the question is not "have you watched *Squid Game*," but "how have you not watched *Squid Game* yet." As well as the memes on Instagram and TikTok, the show is also kicking off an international trend for Dalgona (a Korean toffee sweet that the *Squid Game* characters must use to solve a riddle). YouTubers have been uploading their reactions to every episode, yet there is little talk about the show's content and themes. One might hear that *Squid Game* is one of the most disturbing shows in recent memory, or that it is a traumatic but gripping show. These statements are not incorrect, but if you ask someone about the themes of the show or what cultural contexts influenced *Squid Game's* creation, not many people will reply with concrete answers. *Squid Game* is not a perfect masterpiece, but it is still a worthwhile watch for its important Korean themes and cultural contexts.

Squid Game is a Korean fictional survival series, where 456 people play popular children's games for a chance to win an exorbitant amount of money: ₩45.6 billion (38.7 million USD). The show focuses on several competitors who come from many different backgrounds and communities. The protagonist, Seong Gi-hun, is a gambling addict hounded by loan sharks who attempts to financially support his daughter by being a chauffeur. Ali Abdul is a factory worker from Pakistan who plays the Game when his boss refuses to pay him for months, intending to win the money for his wife and son. Kang Sae-byeok is a pickpocket who wants her family in North Korea to cross the 38th parallel (the border between North and South Korea) safely. These characters could not feel more different in personality, yet they share one common trait: financial instability. All of the players need the prize, and thus compete out of desperation instead of ego. For them, this could be the one chance to continue living, so when mysterious agents invite them to play the Game for money, they all jump to the occasion.

However, the agents do not tell players that if they fail to pass the challenges in this Game, they get disqualified by losing their lives. For example, when players accidentally get caught moving in a move-and-freeze children's game, they get killed on the spot by a giant doll that dictates when the players should stop in the game. Cutting out stars and hearts from Dalgona, an innocent Korean childhood pastime, turns deadly when some of the players start incorrectly cutting out their shapes. Even the very title of the show, *Squid Game*, is a twisted play upon the children's game of the same name, where two teams attack each other in a squid-like formation.

Squid Game does not hesitate to reveal its villains as rich old men, who either orchestrate the Game or spectate at how the destitute workers rip each other apart for the prize money. Some of them even crack nauseating jokes about the players' desperation, and others attempt to assault them for amusement. Simultaneously, the show also depicts the Game's referees as its antagonists. While they are neither the rich developers nor the guests, *Squid Game* makes sure that its viewers realize that the referees are people who tolerate and exert violence against the players for profit, best exemplified in a sickening reveal in the fourth episode. The show thus critiques the rich and the bourgeoisie for having no respect or decency for the destitute, the poor and the needy. Since the pain and suffering of the players benefit them, they do not care for them, or even see the players as human.

PHOTO BY NETFLIX

A player sees the bloody consequences of failing the Game.

PHOTO BY NETFLIX

***Squid Game* players and referees readying themselves for the next challenge.**

PHOTO BY NETFLIX

It is not a stretch to say that the show is a biting commentary of capitalism and worker abuse. Hwang Dong-hyuk developed the original script of the show in 2008, a time of financial crisis for himself and many others around the world, and its influence is clear in *Squid Game's* gruesome allegory of capitalism (Gi-hun's character was even inspired by the organizers of the 2009 SsangYong Motor labor strike). Including children's games in *Squid Game* is also no coincidence. Hwang added them to critique how capitalism adds excessive competition to many innocent subjects and activities. However, Hwang suspended his work on *Squid Game* until 2020, when he saw how the COVID-19 pandemic widened the economic gap between social classes in Korea, and how the workers and poor people in the country suffered. Seeing how *Squid Game* felt increasingly relevant despite over a decade since its conception, Hwang dedicated himself to completing the show, and *Squid Game* premiered on Netflix on Sept. 17 to thousands of viewers. Yet, there has been recent speculation over how *Squid Game's* Netflix translations butcher the original Korean dialogue and how some claim that they obscure certain characters' personalities and anti-capitalist sentiments. As a Korean person who watched the show, I can confirm only this: the subtitles that Netflix presents often convey radically different meanings than what the characters actually say.

Squid Game is a bloody and heartbreaking tale of a game that relies on the sadism of the rich and the suffering of the poor and the workers, not unlike capitalism itself. Make no mistake, this is not a television show that exists for idle entertainment; it is a show with subject matter that demands to be seen and talked about.

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QUESTIONS?: Katheryn Doran, Program Director (kdoran@hamilton.edu)

Athlete Spotlight: Kara Mathes '22

by Sam Dils '22
SPORTS EDITOR

Rowing is a physically grueling sport that heavily relies on teammates moving in sync in order to produce speed. The Hamilton women's rowing team has excelled at the sport's demands. Last spring, they impressively placed second at the National Division III Championships. With the team's first competition at hand this weekend, *The Spectator* asked Kara Mathes '22 some questions about the team's goals for this year and upcoming competitions.

Last spring, your team placed second in the nation at the DIII Championships. How does that success motivate you for this year?
We are really excited and ready to work hard and do whatever we can to make our boats go as fast as possible this year! We know that we can accomplish big things and are excited to see what else we can do.

With lots of new faces joining the team, how has the team atmosphere been throughout your fall practices?
Every year, we have a lot of new faces on the team, so this is nothing new. Everyone has been eager to work hard on the water this year, especially because most of us did not have a fall season last year. The team has been very high energy and we have fun while working hard together.

Looking forward to your first competition this weekend. What are your expectations and goals for the Founders Cup Race?
We are really excited for our first fall race! This race is different from most other fall races, being 4 x 1000 meters. Our goal is to make the boats go as fast as they can for 4000 meters and see what we can do.

With the ultimate goal of another national title run in the spring, what can you and your teammates learn from this shorter fall season to carry throughout the year?
Our team is not very outcome based, so while a national title would be great, we are focused on working as hard as we can and improving every time we get on the water. We are using this fall season to get the ball rolling and we will ride that momentum and excitement into the spring and see what we can accomplish, but the ultimate goal is to make the boats go as fast as they can every time we race.

COURTESY OF HAMILTON COLLEGE

Women's rowing celebrates after their national second-place finish.

PHOTO BY HAMILTON COLLEGE

Kara Mathes '22 is ready to lead women's rowing this fall.

Lightning Round

Any team road trip traditions?
Panera sandwiches on the bus!

Favorite pregame meal/snack?
Mint chocolate clip bar, an orange, and Motts fruit snacks

Best show/movie you've watched recently?
Squid Game

Teammate with a secret talent?
Aisling Mockler '24 does a great Shakira impression

Athlete Spotlight: Kiera Wax '23

by Sam Dils '22
SPORTS EDITOR

The field hockey team defeated Colby 4-1 while losing 4-0 to Tufts this past weekend. Now with a 6-3 record overall and 3-3 against other NESCAC teams, the team looks to build on their previous results so far this season. *The Spectator* asked Kiera Wax '23 a few questions about past results and the team's formula for success.

This past weekend, you made the long trip up to Colby and earned a huge 4-1 win. How does it feel to get that result during such a long weekend of travel?

It always feels good to get the win on our longest trips and I'm very happy that we were successful in both of the Maine games we have had this season. We were especially happy about how strong we came out on Colby's field turf as it is an adjustment from our Astro turf here at Hamilton. It was great to see that our adjustments to this slower surface were made during warmups and our practices on Withiam Field rather than needing an adjustment period at the beginning of the game.

Sitting at 3-3 in the NESCAC, the team has earned some big wins, while only falling to some of the best teams in the country. How would you assess the team's performance so far this season?

I think we have shown that we are capable of playing at a very fast pace and competing with very strong opponents. Despite the losing scores in some of these games, we were happy to see that we were able to make some of the best teams in the country nervous. This has always been a very positive and motivating team, and our performance so far makes me excited about our potential for our future games.

You have been a key part of a strong defense this year. How have your (and the rest of the defenders') efforts helped guide this team to a solid 6-3 overall record?

I think our defense has been so strong because we trust each other. Maggie Reville '22 is great at directing us where we need to be, and we communicate well when it comes to picking up our marks and who is stepping to the ball. I think our defense is great at staying low, anticipating the other team's passes and giving our teammates help when it is needed. I think something I bring that helps our defense is a sense of patience and calmness, as it is important to wait for the right moment to get your stick in there defensively.

Another reason we have been successful is because our defense is also strong offensively, which allows us to get the ball out of our backfield. Keeley Duran '22 in front of me is especially good at finding the space to get the ball up our left sideline, and Maura Holden '23, Maeve Eskandari '24, and Grace Cooper '24 are great at finding the passing lanes up the right and middle of the field to work the ball up to our midfielders.

What are you and your team's goals for the rest of the season?

Our plan is to take it one game at a time, as NESCAC games are always tight and highly competitive, so we are working to pay close attention to the scouting reports provided by our coaches, as well as to play like the score is 0-0 all the time, no matter what the actual score is. Field hockey is a sport where the scores can change in an instant, so you cannot feel comfortable with a 2-0 lead or get defeated if you are down a couple goals, you must continue to play as if there is no score at all. Some more specific goals we have are to keep up our communication throughout the game, keep the accuracy of our passes consistent and to step hard to every ball in order to outstep and outwork the other team.

Lightning Round:

Any team road trip traditions?
On overnight stays we often have our own little nail/hair salon going on in a hotel room thanks to Mary Kate Sisk '22's and Anna Villamil '22's skills.

Favorite pregame meal/snack?
We have been going through plenty of apples lately, although ice cream the night before is a more fun pregame day snack.

Best show/movie you've watched recently?
Squid Game

Teammate with a secret talent?
Maura Holden '23 makes very realistic bird sounds.

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Kiera Wax '23 battles for possession of the ball.